

Application No. 10/720,150
Amendment dated July 6, 2007
After Final Office Action of March 8, 2007

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REMARKS

In view of the above amendment, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Claims 1-20 are now present in this application, of which independent claims 1, 11, and 17 are independent. Claims 1, 11, and 17 have been amended.

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Examiner Interview

As noted in a Statement of Substance of Interview filed June 11, 2007, Applicants' representative discussed the meaning of the phrase "a lip extending inwardly in a radial direction from an interior side of the gasket to prevent particles from being put in a space between the tub and the drum" and argued that the ribs 69a, 69b, and 69c do not read on the claimed lip. The Examiner indicated that if Applicants amended this phrase to recite "a lip extending radially inward from an interior side of the gasket to prevent particles from being put in a space between the tub and the drum" that the claim would clearly define over Kronbetter. The claims have been amended in the manner discussed during the interview, and are believed to place the application into condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

Nonstatutory Obviousness-Type Double Patenting Rejection

Claims 1, 2, 6, and 11-13 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 2, 5, 10-12, and 15 of copending Application No. 10/722,426.

Claims 1, 2, 6, and 11-16 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-3 and 7-10 of copending Application No. 10/722,443.

Claims 1, 2, 6, and 11-16 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-3 and 9-11 of copending Application No. 10/722,455.

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Applicants respectfully believe that the claims, as amended, overcome this rejection. In addition, Applicants submit that the Examiner has not made out a *prima facie* case of obviousness by explaining in detail how the individual claims rejected in the application are obvious, thereby not meeting the Examiner's burden of proof.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kronbetter. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

A complete discussion of the Examiner's rejection is set forth in the Office Action, and is not being repeated here.

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1, 11, and 17 have been amended as discussed more fully during the **Examiner Interview** discussed above. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

With regard to dependent claims 2-10, 12-16, and 18-20, Applicants submit that these claims depend, either directly or indirectly, from one of independent claims 11 and 17, which are allowable for the reasons set forth above, and therefore these claims are allowable based on their dependence from one of claims 11 and 17.

Reconsideration and allowance thereof are respectfully requested.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot.

Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn.

It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

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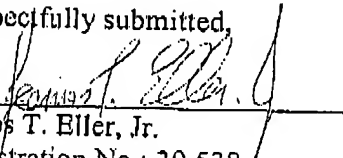
If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone Chad D. Wells, Registration No. 50,875, at (703) 205-8000, in the Washington, D.C. area.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: July 6, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

By 
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